Portsmouth, Virginia Police Department
General Orders Manual

Relationships with Other Agencies		ADM	05
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APPROVED: **Edward G. Hargis, Chief of Police**			

PURPOSE: To establish procedures and responsibilities for liaison with and the maintenance of open channels of communication between the police department and other city, criminal justice, and social service agencies.

GUIDELINES: Establishing and maintaining effective liaisons and open communication channels between the Portsmouth Police Department, neighboring law enforcement agencies, and criminal justice and referral agencies are essential steps in improving cooperation. Positive relationships may result in improved and more efficient and effective law enforcement operations.

PROCEDURES:

I. Relationships with other criminal justice agencies:

A. It is all department personnel's responsibility to maintain harmonious working relationships and communication with the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, District, Juvenile and Domestic Relations, and Circuit Courts, respective clerk's offices, local probation and parole officers, the Sheriff's Office, and any other criminal justice agencies. The department will normally provide all possible information, assistance and support to these agencies as allowed by law.

1. Officers will bring any serious policy or procedural problems or differences with another agency or its personnel to the attention of the Chief of Police through the chain of command. The Chief of Police will initiate a meeting with appropriate personnel of these agencies in order to resolve the problems.

2. Any questions of law or criminal procedure arising from an investigation or an arrest will be addressed to the requestor's commanding officer, the police legal advisor (if any), or the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, in that order.

3. Any criminal cases referred to the Commonwealth's Attorney which result either in a decision of declined to prosecute or dismissed due to the department's mishandling must be carefully reviewed and appropriate corrective action taken. The Commonwealth's Attorney has been asked to bring such cases to the attention of the Police Court Liaison Officer, who will refer the matter to the officer's supervisor and to the supervisor's commanding officer.

B. Department employees will assist and cooperate with all federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in every way practical as allowed by law.

II. Relationships with other city agencies or departments

Inasmuch as the police department is a part of overall governmental service to our citizens, police personnel should maintain harmonious working relationships with the personnel of other city agencies. Whether the contact be during a joint call for service, or through a meeting between departments for coordination and information purposes, the overall goal is to provide needed service to the community through the city's employees.

III. Referrals

A. Officers often encounter citizens, either adult or juvenile, who need specialized forms of help that the department cannot provide, i.e. marriage counseling, mental health counseling, welfare assistance, assistance in handling civil matters, etc. When, in the best judgment of an officer, this situation arises, he or she shall refer the citizen to the most qualified agency to deal with the problem or consult his or her supervisor.

B. Other services available to the officer may include Social Service workers, the Chaplains Bureau, Juvenile Intake workers, foreign language specialists, and others. A point of contact for these services is provided through police dispatch and/or the duty magistrate.

Approved: _____
Edward G. Hargis, Chief of Police